Use of Sub-standared Drugs by the Defence Services Hospitals

860. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

SHRI SIVANAND H. KAUJALGI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Expired, substandard drugs being used for armed forces—'Bullets' soldiers face in hospitals" appearing in 'The Pioneer' dated September 25, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the quanity and value of medicines supplied to army hospitals in the country particularly in Jammu and Kashmir found to be sub-standard, expired and unfit for human consumption during each of the last three years;

(d) whether the Government have conducted any enquiry in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) action taken by the Government against the officials and the firms which supplied such drugs and have been playing with the lives of soldiers; and

(g) the other remedial measures taken in this ragard so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The news item captioned "Expired, sub-standard drugs being used for armed forces —'Bullets' soldiers face in hospitals" published in 'The Pioneer' dated September 25, 1997 appears to be based on the CAG report for the year ending 31st March 1996 relating to purchase and issue of drugs/medicines. The facts of the news item are relating to (i) issue of life expiry drugs in Military hospitals Cannanore, Secundrabad and Command hospital (Air Force Bangalore), (ii) purchase of obsolete medicines, (iii) purchase of medicines and its issue to patients at Lucknow and Delhi before going through Post Laboratory Test (PLT) and (iv) purchase of drugs from smaller and non-reputed companies resulting in poor client satisfaction and high rate of rejection at acceptance stage.

(c) No Sub-standard, expired and unfit for human consumption medicines were supplied to any of the Army Hospital in the country including J&K. If any medicines/drug was declared unfit subsequently, these were on Post-Lab Testing (PLT). In most cases these were DGHS registered firms, wherein DGQA inspection had not been carried out.

(d) to (g) Action Taken Note on the CAG report ending 31st March 1996 has already been sent to CGDA. As per the existing procedure the drugs and medicines are purchased by the Armed Forces Medical Services from the manufacturers registered with the Directorate General of Quality Assurance or the Directorate General of Health Services. The medicines purchased centrally are tested by the Quality Assurance Organisation any only after their acceptance the are released for consumption. In certain emergent situations, the Medical Store Depots make local purchases of medicines from registered firms and accept them on the basis of their claim. However, for ample precaution, some samples are sent for post laboratory testing. The drugs purchased in such emergent situation are issued without waiting for the results of the Laboratory test wherever undertaken. In majority of cases, the laboratory tests confirm the specified standards of medicines. In a small number of cases the medicines are not found to satisfy all the prescribed specifications. In such cases the medicines are returned to the suppliers for replacement or for recovery of the cost of medicines. In certain cases, restrictions are also placed on future purchases from such firms. Defective drugs once detected are not issued, but are destroyed locally on confirmation from the firm concerned.

Embezzlement in Delhi University

861. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA:

SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Rs. 20 lakh embezzled in DU appearing in the 'Hindusthan Times' dated October 12, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the steps taken, proposed to be taken to punish those found guilty; and

(d) the remedial steps taken/proposed to be taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Decongestion and Development of Ports

862. SHRI PROMOD MAHAJAN:

SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to news-item captioned "Maharashtra's port development proposal runs into trouble for environmental reasons" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated October 13, 1997;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) the details of State Government's proposed plan to decongest the saturated Mumbai Port and the Central Government's response thereto;

(e) the recommendations of the Ministry's expert Committee on infrastructural development of ports particularly relating to Maharashtra Government's proposal; and

(f) the time by which the project is likely to be given environmental clearance?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A reference was made to the Ministry of Environment and Forests by M/s. Amma Lines Limited in May, 1996 and by P&O Ports in May, 1997 regarding the proposed Port at Vadhavan in Maharashtra. However, no detailed proposal for environmental clearance as per the prescribed procedure has been submitted to the Ministry. The project proponents have been told to apply, through the State Government, to the Dahanu Taluka Environment Protection Authority. The State Government has also been advised that no preliminary action should be taken by way of construction or otherwise at the proposed site pending detailed examination of the proposal by the Dahanu Taluka Environment Protection Authority and the Ministry.

A number of representations have been received regarding the adverse impact of the Jetty at Dharmatar Creek on Amba Estuary also. These are being examined.

(d) No such proposal has been referred to this Ministry.

(e) and (f) Does not arise.

Ten Point Plan

863. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited has submitted a ten point plan to the Telecom Commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps so far taken by the Telecom Commission in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. MTNL has been the plan titled 'Vision 2000' for modernisation of the Telecom. Services in MTNL, Mumbai and Delhi.

(b) 'Vision 2000' has the following objectives.

(i) Upgradation of the external Plant.

(ii) Greater emphasis on subscriber satisfaction.

(iii) Easy availability of telephones. On demand. These steps are proposed to be achieved at a cost of Rs. 2000 crores.

(c) The document 'Vision 2000' has been approved by the Telecom Commission. MTNL has been asked to implement the plan.

Defence Expenditure

864. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH GAEKWAD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to spend 5% of GDP on Defence as against 2.3% this year as expressed by GOC Western Command;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the main grounds adduced by the GOC for such increase in the defence expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (c) The Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Defence are voted by the Parliament based on the defence allocations made by the Ministry of Finance keeping in view the requirements and security concerns projected by the Ministry of Defence, overall availability of resources and demands from other sectors of economy. It is not possible to made future projections for defence allocation as security concerns and resource position vary from time to time.

[Translation]

Road From Delhi to Badrinath Dham

865. DR. MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA:

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to declare the Delhi-Badrinath Dham road as National Highway and develop it;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the work is likely to start and the schedule of its completion?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G.VENKATARAMAN): (a) to (c) The proposal is at a very preliminary stage and it is too early to give details thereof.

[English]

Decongestion of Ports

866. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA:

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state: